

Workshop 6
Copyright, Corporate Power and Human Rights

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Political economy of intellectual property policy-making – theory and practice

The political-economy of IPRs focuses on the linkage between the different interests and goals of specific groups (corporate, NGOs, consumers and even decision-makers and politicians) and IP systemic outcomes.

A political economy approach treats the international regulation of IPRs as an ongoing battlefield of interests, such as between those who create knowledge on the one hand and those who consume it on the other. Accordingly, it does not take the international system of IPRs for granted. Rather it explores and unveils the political route by which such a system is constituted and associates its outcome to the particular interests of different groups. By doing so we can increase our understanding of the ways in which IPRs are established, managed and exploited at the international, regional and bilateral levels.

In fact the political economy of IPRs is a necessary stage between the economic study of IPRs and the legal interpretation of such rights. In other words, placing IPRs in a political context enables us to understand the process by which economic interests are translated into legal realities.

The presentation will focus both on theoretical aspects and two recent case studies (CIID and pharmaceutical IPRs).